

EXCERPT from "Semi-Annual Report to the President's Board of Consultants on Foreign Intelligence Activities" of October, 1958.

"XI. Intelligence Communications

A. Existing Problems of Communication

1. Two fundamental problems of intelligence communications exist. The first, and more intangible, problem concerns itself with the continuing desire to restrict the distribution of useful pieces of information for reasons of security or operational aspects. This results in the withholding, from non-operational VIA elements, of much information of critical need and considerable value. There should be a program to break down the barriers that still remain between collectors and users, because of outmoded or presently non-existent concepts of "need to know." (CONFIDENTIAL)

2. The second problem is the need for more widespread dissemination, possibly by electrical means, of raw intelligence and field reports to the lower echelons. At the present time, the various intelligence agencies in the Washington area all maintain independent receiving, reproducing and disseminating facilities and, in many instances, information arrives formally long after informal advice. There would appear to be no reason why a completely integrated inter-agency teleprinter tape-relay system with fully automatic retransmission to using echelons could not be designed and installed. This system could also be used to disseminate memoranda, plans and other action papers between CIA components and also for contacts with other suitable Government offices. (CONFIDENTIAL)

B. Speed of Communications

1. The speed of incoming raw intelligence data varies according to the priority of the field and the source of the material. Once a channel for guided missile intelligence information has been established, the data flow is generally rapid and efficient. The problem has been in determining what information is available, what channels are available, and how to assure rapid lateral dissemination of key intelligence information.

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2. Conversely, some information coming through Attache channels, addressed to ONI and to the Air Force is not received in CIA for a considerable period of time. In addition, there have been examples of reports or cables which were not disseminated to CIA until we learned of their existence in ONI and called it to the attention of the Cable Secretariat. (SECRET)

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XII. Relative Value of Sources (Quality of Raw Intelligence)

A. Nuclear Energy

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1. [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] continues to be perhaps the most valuable single collection effort. (SECRET)

3. Information from DD/P bearing on the Soviet AE program, has been generally low grade and sporadic although several highly significant items of information were provided by the source. (SECRET)

4. In most of the non-Soviet areas, press and radio reports continue to be the prime source of information available on atomic energy developments and provide adequate coverage of all activities not related to weaponry. (SECRET)

B. Guided Missile and Space Technology

The quality of guided missile scientific and technical intelligence information varies. The information on the Soviet missile flight test activities is excellent. Information on current Soviet missile concepts, designs, and preliminary development activity is practically non-existent. The quality of raw intelligence on Soviet missile production and operational deployment activity is also very poor. (SECRET)

C. Aircraft

2. The quality of intelligence on Soviet air development from other sources such as Attache, open publication, and returnee and defector reports is generally very good. (SECRET)

D. Electronics

1. Except for the drying-up of certain specific types of sources, such as the German returnees, the quality of raw intelligence information is much better today than during the period of, say, five years ago although still further improvement is needed in nearly all categories. (SECRET)

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E. Biological and Chemical Warfare

1. Raw intelligence on CW from the Soviet Union, other than open literature, is scant and of poor quality. Open scientific literature remains a primary source of Soviet CW related information. (SECRET)

2. The little basic intelligence received on BW, other than the fundamental information derived from open literature, is of poor quality. (SECRET)

F. Other

For data on Soviet space medicine we have had to rely largely on newspaper and radio accounts, or popularized versions of scientific work. Hence the reliability, quality, and quantity of raw intelligence in this field are low. (CONFIDENTIAL)

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